

A N
E S S A Y
To Prevent the
Exportation of W O O L,
And Retrieve the —
Woollen Manufacture
O F
E N G L A N D.

Most dutifully and humbly Offered to the Con-
sideration of our Most Gracious Sovereign

King GEORGE the Second;

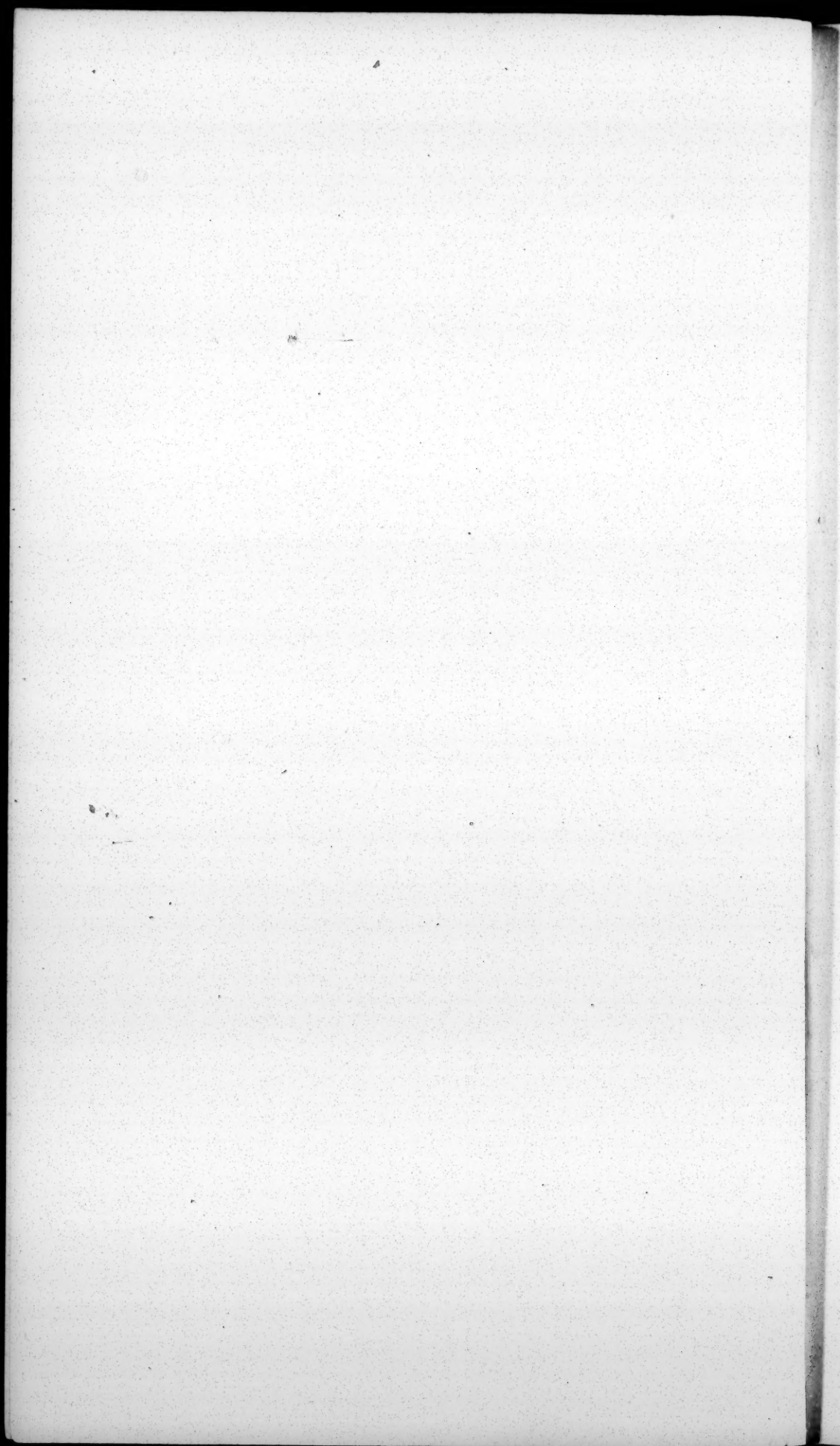
AND THE
Right Honourable and Honourable
THE
TWO HOUSES of PARLIAMENT.

By CORNELIUS STRONGCASTLE.

L O N D O N :

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A N
E S S A Y

To prevent the
Exportation of WOOL, &c.

THE *Woollen Manufactures* of *England* are our Golden Mines, which have for many Years past produc'd us between Eight and Ten Millions *per Ann.* and the Loss of Part of them have burden'd this Kingdom with a Multitude of unemploy'd Poor ; which Misfortune the Restoration of this Manufacture will greatly alleviate.

But before an effectual Remedy can be applied, an Inquiry must be made, How we came to lose so great a Part of it ? which I believe will be found to proceed from the following Causes.

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First,

First, From the great Importation of Cotton, which has been the primary Cause of the Exportation of our Wool, for many Manufactures are now made out of Cotton, which formerly were made from Wool, both for Men and Womens Wear, *viz.* Fustians, Cotton Petticoats, Cotton Binding, Cotton Gowns, and Quilting with Cotton; this having lessen'd the Consumption of our Wool at Home, and sunk the Price, which encourages the Exportation of it; and the more 'tis exported, the better and larger Quantity of Cloth our Rivals will make, and we the less.

Secondly, From the Importation of *Russia* Drab, a strong Sort of Linnen Cloth, which is much wore for Mens Cloaths.

Thirdly, From the Importation of *Scotch* and *Irish* Worsted Yarn.

Fourthly, From the *French* and other Nations increasing and improving their Woollen Manufacture, from the Exportation of our Wool, and Instructions of our Workmen, who at the Conclusion of the last War with *France*, when the
Army

Army was disbanded in *Flanders*, went and settled in *France*, and other Countries; for many of the Soldiers were brought up in the Woollen Manufacture.

Fifthly, From the corrupt Practice of stretching a Piece of Cloth from forty-three or forty four Yards to near fifty.

Sixthly, From taking out the finest of the Wool, and selling it abroad, to the great Prejudice of the Manufacture, which has been practised by some Manufacturers themselves.

Lastly, From the great Consumption of printed Linnens and Cottons, seeing the Decay of our Woollen Manufactory is owing to the above Causes, the Contraries to these will produce contrary Effects, *viz.* the Recovery of our Woollen Trade.

First, The laying a higher Duty upon Cotton; and printed Linnen and Cotton; will certainly increase the Consumption of our Wool at Home, which will raise the Price; and the higher the Price is, the less will be exported, which will prevent Foreign Nations from making so much and so good Cloth;

Cloth, and will increase the Exportation of our Woollen Manufactures. For, to prevent the Exportation of Wool, without finding a Way to use more of it at Home, and export more of our Woollen Goods, will be like stopping the Course of a great River, before a new Channel is cut to carry off the Water ; which will either overflow the Country above, or bear down all before it.

Secondly, It will be necessary to lay either a very high Duty upon *Russia* Drabs, or a Penalty on the Wearer of any Linnen Garment, either Coat, Waistcoat, or Breeches (except Tick-
ing of our own Manufacture).

Thirdly, As the Importation of *Irish* and *Scotch* Worsted Yarn, sinks the Value of our own Wool, we had better give them Fifty *per Cent.* advance for their Wool, than either to let them export their Yarn, or sell their Wool to the *French* and other Nations ; for since they are not permitted to export their Woollen Manufacture, 'tis but reasonable we should buy the Overplus of their Wool which they can't use themselves.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, If all the Woollen Manufacture exported, was inspected by Persons who understand it, and none to be sent abroad but what is well made, it would prevent the Exportation of bad Goods, a Thing too much practised ; and likewise the Stretching of Cloth beyond its due Measure.

As 'tis usual for one Manufacture to destroy or prejudice another, as the Cotton has our Woollen ; that Manufacture whose Materials are the Produce of our own Country, ought to have the Preference given it by the Nation, as most conducive to the National Interest.

And as the Wool now sold Abroad, will remain for a Year or two a dead Weight upon the Nation, till the Trade can be recover'd, which is the Design of keeping the Wool at Home, it would be more for the Interest of the Nation to let the dead Stock remain in Cloth, than Wool, which might be effected by exchanging Wool for Cloth with the Manufacturers.

It is unanimously agreed, that the Exportation of our Wool is a great Prejudice

judice to this Nation, because it leaves our Poor unemploy'd, and without it other Nations can't make good Cloth; for one Pack of our Wool, being mix'd with two of theirs, enables them to make three times as much Cloth as we should make with one Pack of our Wool.

Therefore the preventing the Exportation of Wool, is of the greatest Consequence to this Nation, and particularly to the landed Interest, and Farmers, who for many Years past, have been great Sufferers from the small Price that Wool has sold for.

It may be objected by some Persons, that if we can't sell our Cloth, to what Purpose should we keep our Wool at Home; is it not better to make Money of our Wool, than to let it lye useles?

The Answer is plain: *France*, and other Nations where the Woollen Manufacture is lately improv'd, make and sell more Cloth than the Produce of their Wool; they buy Wool of us to answer those Demands; We manufacture and sell the Residue of our Wool; therefore the whole Produce of their Wool

Wool and ours, when manufactur'd, is fold ; which plainly demonstrates, that we could sell the whole Growth of our Wool, if we manufactur'd it ourselves, besides the Advantage of distressing Foreign Nations, by rendering their Manufacture worse.

This is as plain and demonstrable a Truth, as any in the *Mathematicks*, that the Whole is Equal to all its Parts taken together ; and 'tis founded upon that Maxim.

By this 'tis plain we can sell the whole Growth of our Wool, when manufactur'd, because 'tis now sold by other Nations and ourselves, when 'tis wrought up.

As we are an Island, 'tis much more difficult to prevent the Running of Wool, than if we were upon the Continent : Besides, we are so very expert at Cheating the Government in the Smuggling Trade, that I believe no Nation upon Earth can equal us.

The Motives that induce those Persons to send Wool to *France* and other Countries, arise from these two Things ;

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the want of Consumption for it at Home, and the advance in Price they make by exporting it : And although the Law has made it a Capital Punishment to export it, nevertheless they will for Gain venture at it : If the Wool is seiz'd, very likely the Owner is not to be found, as has been the Case of a Parcel of Wool that was stopt at *Bristol* some time ago.

An universal Registry of Wool, will never prevent the Exportation of it, while *France* and other Nations are able to give more for it than our own Manufacturers, and the Consumption of it is lessen'd at Home by the Importation of Cotton, and Use of *Russia* Drabs ; Mr. *Webber's* Scheme for an universal Registry of Wool, is defective in this, that after the Wool has past through several Hands and register'd, there remains no Certainty to the Nation, that the last Person who is charg'd with that Quantity of Wool upon the Registry, manufactures it, but he may export it unknown to the Registry, unless some Person informs against him.

Thus

Thus ends this Scheme which has made such a Noise in *England*, as if it would infallibly prevent the Running of Wool, when it will not prevent the Exportation of a single Pack, unless some Persons inform. This is exactly the Case we are in at present; the Parliament have provided against the Exportation of it by a severe Law, and if People would but inform against those who export it, there needs no other Law; but as few or no Informations are exhibited against those who do, another way must be taken by the Government to prevent it.

One Reason, I believe, that no Informations are lodg'd against the Exporters, arises from hence; that they are not sensible of the Loss the Nation sustains by it; for they conclude, that if we can't sell our Manufacture, we ought to sell our Wool, not imagining that the selling of our Wool, prevents the selling of our Cloth.

Mr. *Webber's* Scheme would put the Nation to about five or six hundred thousand Pounds yearly Charge, the Patentees might fill their Pockets,

and leave us just where they found us.

That the present Woollen Manufactures, and all those who have been concern'd in the Exportation of our Woollen Goods, are not able to recover this almost lost Trade, or prevent its further Declension, will plainly appear from hence: That, when the Trade was in its Meridian, they could not prevent its Decay, much less are they able to recover it, seeing it requires a much greater Power to recover what is lost, than to keep it when in Possession. This, I hope, is a sufficient Demonstration, that no Power less than our Government, *viz.* King and Parliament, can possibly prevent its further Declension, or recover it from Foreign Nations: This therefore ought to frustrate any Scheme that shall be offered, which excludes our Legislature from the Chief Power.

If the Stock in Trade of all Persons in the Kingdom who deal in Wool, Worsted, or Woollen Yarn, and likewise the Farmers Stock of Sheep, were subject to the Inspection of the Excise, and their Accounts kept Debtor and
Creditor,

Creditor, it would be of more Service to prevent the Exportation of Wool, than Mr. *Webber's* Scheme, which proposes none to inspect the Stocks of any Persons concern'd in the Woollen Trade, unless they are inform'd against ; so that half the Wool in the Nation may be Run, notwithstanding this Registry of his.

But even this Inspection of the Excise could not effectually prevent the Running of Wool, because the slaughter'd Sheep would perplex the Account, and could never be kept regular ; besides, those that had a mind to deceive the Registry, might, when they bought Sheep or Wool at a Fair or Market, conceal their true Names and Place of Abode, which would render the Account intricate. Moreover, there is another insurmountable Difficulty which will always prevent the Office from coming at the true Knowledge of the Manufacturers Stock, seeing they often employ four, five, six or eight hundred Spinners for five or six Miles round 'em, which Stock of Wool in their Possession varying every Hour in the Day, can never be certainly known to the Office ; therefore these Difficulties not being to
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be got over, destroys of Course, all Registries and Inspections of the Excise, by rendering them erroneous.

By this 'tis manifest, that another Way must be taken to prevent the Mischiefs attending the Exportation of Wool.

France and other Nations have of late Years given more for our Wool, than our own Manufacturers. If the Parliament enables our Manufacturers to give as much or more for our Wool than Foreigners do, it will effectually put a Stop to the Exportation of it, but then the whole Growth of our Wool must be bought up by some Persons, to prevent any Part of its falling into the Hands of Foreigners.

The Woollen Manufacturers of *England* are not able to buy up all the yearly Growth of our Wool, as the Trade now stands, and unless that is done, 'tis impossible to prevent the Running of it ; nor is it in the Power of any private Persons to raise a Sum of Money equal to the Undertaking : Therefore, 'tis the Legislature alone who are able to raise a Sum for that Purpose ; and as
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the Remainder of our Wool, which our Manufacturers don't buy, must be kept by the Government till the Woollen Trade increafes, which it will soon do, when the Exportation of Wool is prevented, and a higher Duty laid upon Cotton, and a Penalty upon the Wearer of any Linnen Garment, either Coat, Waistcoat, or Breeches, except Ticking of our own Manufacture.

Since the Nation must bear the Weight of the dead Stock of Wool till the Trade can be recovered, it would be more for the Trade's Interest, and the same Stock would do, to let it remain in Goods manufactur'd, rather than in Wool, seeing it must be manufactur'd before 'tis exported. This might be effected by the Government's exchanging Wool for Goods made with the Manufacturers: This Method would presently fet Numbers of People to work in the Woollen Trade, which is very much wanted.

The Goods receiv'd in lieu of Wool, might be sold once a Month at a publick Sale for Exportation; but if it should be determin'd not to receive Goods, then the Manufacturers must pay ready Money for their Wool.

When

When *France* and other Nations find they can't have any more of our Wool, they will very likely try what Price we will take for our Cloth as soon as it comes out of the Loom, when 'tis but about half manufactur'd, by which means, if they are permitted to buy it in that manner, they will keep half the Profit of our Woollen Manufacture in their Hands, and likewise be Masters of the Foreign Markets, and we shall be little better than their Journeymen; for we shall lose the Benefit of employing our Scourers, Fullers, Shearers, Dyers, and Hotpressers, and likewise the Importation of all Sorts of Materials for Dying, which would decrease our Navigation.

The Advantages that would accrue to this Nation, from the Advance of Wool to the Price it bore formerly, which was near double, to what it fetches now, would be,

First, The strength'ning the landed Interest, and greatly benefiting the Farmers, who have been great Sufferers for many Years past, from the low Price of their Wool.

Secondly,

Secondly, It will distress other Nations, and prevent their buying our Wool, by which means we shall certainly recover our Woollen Trade, and thereby manufacture all the Growth of our Wool; for there is no Way left to prevent the Exportation of Wool, but suddenly to advance the Price, and set more Hands to work it up.

When our Wool sold for a much higher Price than it does at present, our Woollen Manufacture sold better Abroad, and the Advance of the Price of Wool will advance the Price of the Manufacture but very little; and as the Cheapness of Wool at Home is a great Encouragement to the Exportation of it, so the Advance of it will contribute very much to the keeping of it at Home.

The Truth of this Proposition is demonstrated by the Manufacture of our Neighbours the *Dutch*, who are as famous for the Manufacture of fine Hollands, as we are for the Woollen; and the Materials of their Manufacture are the Growth of their own Country, as ours are.

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Dutch

Dutch Flax is some of the best Flax in the World, and bears a very high Price in *Holland*, which is the Reason very little of it is exported from thence : If it was to fall as our Wool has done of late Years, it would soon be imported by other Nations, and manufactur'd into Cloth, to the Prejudice of their Manufacture ; but the Dearness of it keeps it at Home, and yet the *Dutch* have a great Trade for their fine *Hollands*.

As Oppression in Government impoverishes and ruins a Nation, so does it in any Branch of Trade contribute to its Ruin. The Manufacture now under Consideration, has suffer'd very much from two Sorts of Persons in *England* ; the Wool-Jobbers, or Wool-Staplers, and the Engrossers or Factors of Wool-len Cloth, who both oppress the Manufacturers, and of Consequence hurt the Manufacture.

The Engrossers of Wool, or Wool-Staplers, buy it up of the Farmers at Shearing Time, sell Part of it to the Manufacturers, and the rest is exported.

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The Engrossers or Factors of Woollen Goods having more Money than the Manufacturers, govern the Market in the Price of Woollen Goods, and will always keep the Manufacturers poor, and thereby oppress the Trade.

The Legislature taking the Woollen Manufacturers under their Protection, will release 'em from their Bondage to these two powerful Masters, and the Cloth and other Woollen Goods will come as cheap, if not cheaper to the Merchant who exports them, notwithstanding the Advance of Wool, than at present.

There is a Practice of exporting Wool to *France* under a Pretence of its being manufactur'd: 'Tis made up like Wadding for Mens Cloaths, but 'tis presently reduced into Wool again, carded, spun, and wove into Cloth ; this being a manifest Deceit, must have a speedy Stop put to the Exportation of it.

The Consequence of stopping the Exportation of Wool, if it was possible to effect it without the Parliament's buying it all up at a greater Price than

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'tis now sold at to *France*, would be a sudden Fall of the Price of it, in exact Proportion to the Quantity now exported, *viz.* If half our Wool is now yearly run, it would sink to half the Price it now sells for, because there would be but half the Number of Buyers; and thus it would continue to be, till our Foreign Woollen Trade increas'd, or more of our Wool was consum'd at Home: How great a Blow this would be to the landed Interest, and Farmers of this Kingdom, is very visible.

If an Act of Parliament was made, that no Farmer, or any who has Property in Sheep and Lambs; nor Felmonger, or any other who takes the Wool of slaughter'd Sheep or Lambs, shall sell their Wool at any other Place or Market, than at those appointed by the Act, under the Penalty of —, and Persons should be appointed by our Legislature to buy up the Wool every Market Day at the advanced Price, *viz.* about double to what it bears now, and likewise to sell on that Day the Wool to the Manufacturers, at a small Advance above the prime Cost, enough to defray the Expences of the Government's
Agents;

Agents ; and about double the Number of Towns to the Counties would do, for Markets to sell the Wool at.

No Manufacturer should be compell'd to buy his Wool of the Government, he may buy it of the Farmer if he will, but at no other Place than at the Markets to be appointed. But then he must give the advanced Price for the Wool, which the Government's Agents give, who must have Orders to buy up all the Wool they can.

The Government's Agents in the Country to be paid in Proportion to the Business they do.

There will be no Necessity of building Warehouses in the Market Towns to keep the Wool in, most Towns having empty Buildings that will serve that Purpose.

The Agents for buying and selling Wool, to send up to the General Office at *London* an Account every Week of all the Wool bought and sold, and the Persons Names and Places of Abode, of whom they bought it, and to whom they

they fold it, to be enter'd in the General Account.

The Agents for Buying and Selling the Wool, are not to pay or receive the Money for it, they may have blank Bills given 'em, to fill up the respective Sums for each Man's Wool, which the Collectors of the Excise, and Receivers of the Land-Tax may have Orders to give the Farmers Money for; or the Agents to draw upon his Majesty's Commissioners for the Woollen Manufacture, at their Office at *London*, where all Manufacturers, who pay for their Wool in Goods, should remit them, before their Wool is deliver'd them, and an Order sent by the Commissioners to their Agent in the Country to deliver such a Quantity of Wool to the Manufacturer at such a Price. If the Payment is made in Money for the Wool, the Manufacturer, after having seen the Wool, and knowing the Price, is to go to the Collectors of the Excise, or Receiver of the Land-Tax, and on paying the Money, is to have an Order from him, to the Agent to deliver the Quantity of Wool paid for.

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As this would cause an Increase of Business both to the Collector of Excise, and Receiver of the Land-Tax, if they were allow'd to deduce Two and a half *per Cent.* out of all the Money they paid the Farmer for Wool, it would pay them for their Trouble.

If the Legislature should determine to receive Goods of the Manufacturer for Wool, some Persons, who are good Judges of the several Branches of the Woollen Manufacture, must be appointed to inspect the Goods, when sent up to the Commissioners at *London*, to see they are well made, and that no more is paid for 'em than the Value.

The Woollen Goods sold by the Government for Exportation, not to be sold by Auction, but to be made up in Lots, and the lowest Price fix'd to each Lot, and no more to be added to the prime Cost of the Goods, than what will pay the Charges of the Office at *London*, and the Interest of the Money the Parliament must advance for buying the Wool.

It

It is not possible to determine the exact Sum of Money that would be requisite to carry on this Affair, it may require a Million of Money ; but no Sum that is in our Power to raise, ought to deter us from retrieving the Woollen Manufacture of this Nation, which has been a Source of great Wealth to us, and the Loss of Part of which, has prejudic'd the landed Interest and Farmers of this Kingdom, in the low Price of the Wool : And the want of Employment for our Poor, has of late Years burden'd the Parishes very much ; but the retrieving of this Manufacture will at once strengthen the landed Interest, benefit the Farmers, employ the Poor, and bring Power and Wealth to this Nation.

To procure these valuable Benefits to this Nation, there is nothing wanting but Unanimity of our most gracious Sovereign and his Parliament, under the Guidance and Direction of the Supreme Being, who is the Influencer of the Heart of Man unto Good.

Lastly,

Lastly, If only a Fourth, or Fifth Part of the Sum necessary to carry on this Affair was raised in Money, and the Remainder made out in Bills, it would circulate the Bills, and save the Nation the Interest of seven or eight hundred thousand Pounds. And by the Increase of our Woollen Manufacture, one hundred thousand Families might be employ'd in it more than there are at present, whose Earnings, at a moderate Computation of Two Shillings a Day for a Family, *viz.* Man, Woman, and Child, would amount to *L.* 10,000 *per Diem*. And if the Punishment for Exporting of Wool, which is Death, was chang'd to a large Fine, besides the Forfeiture of the Wool, it would have a better Effect than the present Law, and produce more Informations; especially if the Informer was intitled to an yearly Income during Life, on Discovery of any Wool exported, and a certain Sum for every Parcel of Wool discovered afterwards.

By what has been said in this Essay, it is plain there is a Necessity for some Acts of Parliament, to strengthen and support the Woollen Manufacture, which

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has suffer'd from the Transactions of private Persons, who, to enrich themselves, have acted contrary to the true Interest of the Trade: And there is no doubt, but our Gracious King and Wise Parliament will take such Measures as will put it for ever out of the Power of any Persons hereafter concern'd in the Trade, to reduce it to that languishing Condition 'tis in at present.

But, as there are some Things contain'd in this Essay, that can't be put in Execution, but by Persons well vers'd in Trade, and have large Correspondence; such as Buying the Wool, Selling it to the Manufacturers, taking Woollen Goods in Exchange, and vending them in several Parts of the World, which is the Province of the Merchants.

Therefore, if the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of *London* were to have the Management of buying the Wool, and disposing of the Woollen Goods committed to their Care, and to raise a Sum of Money by Subscription on Interest for carrying on this Affair, and the Parliament to order the State of the Woollen Manufacture to be laid yearly before them,

them, that they might see the Progress that is made in it : By this Means the Manufacture would be rescu'd out of the Hands of the Wool-Staplers and Woollen-Factors, who get at least 30 *per Cent.* from the Manufacture, besides what the Merchant ought to get for Exportation ; so that our Woollen Goods may well come dearer at Foreign Markets, than those of other Nations, which has not a little contributed to lessen the Exports of our Cloth.

This whole Affair may be so conducted, without Compulsion on either Side, that the Manufacturers may find it their Interest to buy the Wool of those who take off their Manufacture ; and it would be to the Advantage of those who sell the Wool, to take Goods manufactured, if they had a free Trade granted them to dispose of 'em in any Part of the World, or even to sell them in *Great Britain.*

As the Recovery of the Woollen Manufacture is of the greatest Consequence to this Nation, in that it will strengthen the landed Interest, benefit the Farmer, employ the Poor, and increase the Wealth and Power of this Nation,

Nation, there is no doubt but the Parliament would let the City, if they are willing to undertake the Affair, have some of the Publick Money for a Year or two without Interest, if there should be a Necessity for it, that a vigorous Effort may be made by the Publick to regain that Trade, lost by the selfish and oppressive Conduct of private Persons, and then it will be out of the Power of Foreign Nations to deprive us of it.

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